

hadith refute the claims of those who state that the reason it is forbidden to pray in the places of the camels is that their urine and dung are impure. Actually, the urine and the dung of any animal that is permissible to eat is not considered impure.

The ugliness of Satan

Satan has a very ugly appearance. This is something well-accepted by the mind. Allah compares the branches of the tree of Zuqqum in Hell to the heads of the devils. Allah says,

إِنَّهَا شَجَرَةٌ تَخْرُجُ فِي أَصْلِ الْجَحِيمِ ﴿١٦﴾ طَلْعُهَا كَأَنَّهُ رُءُوسُ الشَّيَاطِينِ

“Is it better as a welcome, or the tree of Zaqqum? Lo! We have appointed it a torment for wrong-doers. Lo! It is a tree that springs in the heart of hell. Its crop is as it were the heads of the devils” (*al-Saaffaat* 62-65).

Christians of the Middle Ages used to picture Satan as a black man with a pointed beard, raised eyebrows, a mouth that emits flames, horns and hoofs and a tail.’

Satan has two horns

In *Sahih Muslim*, it is recorded from Ibn Umar that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

لَا تَحَرَّوْا بِصَلَاتِكُمْ طُلُوعَ الشَّمْسِ وَلَا غُرُوبَهَا فَإِنَّهَا تَطْلُعُ بِقَرْنَيْ شَيْطَانٍ

¹ See *Dairat al-Maarif al-Haditha*, p. 357.

“Do not seek to pray when the sun is rising or when it is setting, verily it rises [and sets] between the two horns of a devil.” In *al-Bukhari* and *Muslim*, it is also recorded that the Prophet (peace be upon him) said,

إذا طلع حاجب الشمس فدعوا الصلاة حتى تغيب ولا تحينوا بصلاتكم

طلوع الشمس ولا غروبها فإنها تطلع بين قرني شيطان

“If the sun is setting then leave the prayer until it disappears. And do not wait for your prayer until the sun is rising, nor while it is setting. For verily it sets and rises between the two horns of Satan.” These hadith are referring to the polytheists of the Arabs who used to worship the sun and would prostrate to it when it would set or rise, for that reason Satan would establish himself in that direction so that their worship could be directed towards him.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) has forbidden us to pray during that time. Actually, the correct opinion is that prayer during that time is permissible if there is some reason for it, such as the prayer upon entering the mosque. It is not allowed, though, if there is no reason for it, such as simply a supererogatory prayer.²

The meaning of the Prophet's words is that one should not intentionally set that time for prayer.

And from among the other narrations that mention the horn of Satan is the following hadith that is recorded in *Sahih al-Bukhari*: Ibn Umar related that he saw the Prophet (peace be upon him) pointing to the east and state,

إِنَّ الْفِتْنَةَ هَا هُنَا إِنَّ الْفِتْنَةَ هَا هُنَا مِنْ حَيْثُ يَطْلُعُ قَرْنُ الشَّيْطَانِ

¹ With that exact wording, the hadith does not seem to be in either *al-Bukhari* or *Muslim*. However, it is close to a hadith in *al-Bukhari* and a hadith with a similar meaning may also be found in *Muslim*.—JZ

² This is a matter in which there is some difference of opinion on this question. The author is simply stating the opinion he prefers.—JZ

“Verily, the trial will come from here, the calamity will come from here, where the horn of Satan rises.” The latter statement is referring to the East.

Their ability and strength

Allah has given the jinn power and ability that He has not given humans. Allah has informed us of some of their ability, including great speed and movement.

One of the *afreet* of Satanic Jinn promised Solomon that he would be able to bring the throne of Sheba to Jerusalem in a period of time that was so short that a man would not be able to stand from his place of sitting. But one who had knowledge of the Book said, “I will bring it before your gaze returns to you.” Allah has described this incident in the Quran with the following verses,

قَالَ عِفْرِيتٌ مِّنَ الْجِنِّ أَنَا ءَاتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ تَقُومَ مِّنْ مَّقَامِكَ وَإِنِّي عَلَيْهِ لَقَوِيٌّ أَمِينٌ ﴿٣٩﴾ قَالَ الَّذِي عِنْدَهُ عِلْمٌ مِّنَ الْكِتَابِ أَنَا ءَاتِيكَ بِهِ قَبْلَ أَنْ يَرْتَدَّ إِلَيْكَ طَرْفُكَ فَلَمَّا رَآهُ مُسْتَقِرًّا عِنْدَهُ قَالَ هَذَا مِنْ فَضْلِ رَبِّي

“A stalwart of the Jinn said: I will bring it to you before you can rise from your place. Lo! I verily am strong and trusty for such work. One with whom was knowledge of the scripture said: I will bring it to you before your gaze returns to you. And when he saw it set in his presence, and he said, ‘This is from the bounties of my Lord.’” (*al-Naml* 39-40).

They preceded mankind in matters related to space

The jinn used to go to the lowest heaven to eavesdrop on the inhabitants of the heavens in order to find out what event would occur in